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CIA impersonator convicted

By Allegra Bennett

A federal jury yesterday convicted a 35-year-old Baltimore man of conning a bank officer into giving him \$31,500—some of which was embezzled bank funds—by pretending he was a CIA agent whose life was in danger.

The jury returned guilty verdicts against Ferruccio Locco, of the 5900 block Winthrop avenue for impersonating a federal officer and using the official to embezzle money from the Hamilton Federal Savings and Loan Association.

According to testimony in the case, Mr. Locco took advantage of the affections of the woman, who was assistant secretary of the savings and loan in the 5600 block Harford road, where she had been employed since 1968.

Mr. Locco was a customer at Hamilton Federal and in the fall of 1979 the two began seeing each other socially, according to court papers.

According to testimony, last May, Mr. Locco told the woman that he was a CIA agent and was being blackmailed by the Palestine Liberation Organization because of his participation in the ill-fated rescue attempt of the hostages in Iran in 1980.

The woman said that Mr. Locco would periodically leave town and also claimed to have undergone guerrilla training in Guatemala.

As the scheme progressed between May and

August, 1981, Mr. Locco told the savings and loan official that the PLO was watching her and her mother and that their lives were also in danger because of their association with him, the woman testified.

During the course of the scheme, she turned over \$11,500 in bank funds through unauthorized loans and thefts of two savings accounts, testimony showed.

Mr. Locco not only persuaded her to obtain that money but also induced her mother to turn over \$13,000, representing her entire retirement fund held at that bank, and obtained \$9,000 from the woman's friend, the victimized financial officer said.

But the money was not used to buy safety, testimony showed.

In a statement he made to U.S. marshals after his arrest, Mr. Locco said he used the money to buy clothes, and pay for a weekend in Ocean City and a 10-day holiday in Daytona Beach, Fla., for him and his girl friend, for whom he purchased a new car.

He also gave some of the money to his children and to his former wife, he said in the statement, but denied asking the savings and loan secretary to get money from Hamilton Federal.

The woman was not charged in the embezzlements. Assistant U.S. Attorney James Ulwick, who prosecuted the case, declined to say why.